

Sample Slab Update #12 – July 2016

The newsletter for sample slab collectors

Sample Slabs Book Available for Immediate Shipping at Pre-Order Price

SAMPLE SLABS

*Including Sample, Promotional, Club, Show,
Luncheon, Novelty, and Young Numismatist
Coin and Currency Holders.*

SECOND EDITION



DAVID SCHWAGER

Sample Slabs is again ahead of schedule and I now have the printed copies in hand. Pre-order customers, I already mailed your copies. Because the earlier pre-order offer is good until July 29, you can now pay the pre-order price and have your book shipped right away.

Starting August 9 at the World's Fair of Money, the book will be available to the general public for \$26 + \$5 shipping for softcover and \$12 for the PDF download. From now until July 29, the discounted pre-order prices are:

Softcover	\$21 + \$5 shipping
PDF	\$10
Both	\$26 + \$5 shipping

To order, send PayPal to davidschwager@hotmail.com. Be sure to include your mailing address. If ordering the PDF download, include an email when I can send a download link. Email me if you would prefer to send a check or pay a different way. If you will be at the World's Fair of Money in Anaheim, email me to arrange a special show price of only \$19 cash or check in person. Books ordered through any channel are signed on request.

The expanded second edition of Sample Slabs includes:

- 760 slabs (180 more than the first edition)
- 35 grading services (3 more than the first edition)
- 900+ photos (b&w in softcover, color in PDF, 300 more than the first edition)
- 620 pages at 8 1/2" by 5 1/2" (175 more than the first edition)
- Prices for all items based on detailed market research

This offer is available only to Sample Slab Update readers. Please email me with any questions and order now to get your discount.

Market Notes



Although not exactly samples, several pieces from the PCGS grading set made their way to eBay in the last few months. The grading set is made up of coins meant to be ideal examples of their grades, as training tools and to help grading consistency. If a grader want, for example, to know exactly what a Fine-12 Barber half should look like, the grader can view the Fine-12 Barber half from the grading set. These holders normally stay in the PCGS office and it is unclear how they came onto the market, although both sellers invited buyers to verify their legitimacy with PCGS. They offered a rare opportunity to collectors of unusual holders.

The first two, both Lincoln Wheat cents, sold on April 17 for \$99.99 each. The next two, also Wheat cents, went low, earning \$42 and \$34.33 in listings by the same seller. A second seller then appeared on the market, with grading set slabs auctioned at:

Morgan 1883 VF20 \$107.50

Barber dime 1903-O G6 \$107.50

Buffalo 1937 XF45 \$197.50

Mercury 1942-D XF45 \$274.69

Defying the usual pattern for new to the market material, prices rose as the sales continued.

Blanchard samples appear undervalued. I priced them at \$40 in the first edition and \$50 in the second. Only one, however, appeared on eBay in the last three years, and the two in Sample Slab Update Sale #3 sold quickly at \$50 each. Without “sample” on the label, they won’t become as valuable as Compugrade and Hallmark samples, but the next sale could go for more than catalog. I have two Blanchards, and probably will keep both, but could try auctioning one to see what happens.

Speaking of Compugrade, a Compugrade sports card appeared in eBay and quickly sold for \$29. The style of the label suggests that Compgrade cards and Compugrade coins are different companies, but no-one seems to know for sure.

SG Rare Coins of Hawthorne, New Jersey, the seller of the NGC Liberty nickel hoard, offered a stash of ANACS-010-1-1. Possibly the first ANACS sample slab, these small white holders have 1954-S dimes and grades of MS 63 or MS 64. Eight sold from June 27 through July 18 at prices from \$56 to \$24.50. If these are like the Liberty nickel hoard, more could appear and provide opportunities to obtain this desirable early type and a below-market price.



Sample Collector Meeting at the Anaheim ANA

I invite you to an informal meeting of sample slab collectors at the Anaheim ANA convention, Wednesday August 10 at 6:30 pm. We will meet at the convention hotel, the Anaheim Hilton, in the lobby bar, the [Mix Lounge](#). This will be an informal get-together, without program or agenda, intended to give collectors an opportunity to meet face-to-face, talk about samples, and trade. Enjoy discussing your collecting specialty and, optionally, having some overpriced beverages and food. The lobby also has a Starbucks and a small food court. No need to RSVP, and feel free to invite any other collectors. See you in Anaheim.

Sample Slab Collecting in the Future

The sample market is thin, with about \$40,000 per year sold on eBay. I am probably 5% of that total as a buyer or seller. The circulation of Sample Slab Update is about 120. Not every sample collector reads this newsletter, but many do. Even one collector leaving the market can have an impact. As an example, the NGC sample market has not completely recovered from the top NGC specialist selling his collection in December 2014. Not only did he make high-quality NGC samples available to collectors, he was no longer a buyer.

But, one major collector entering the market can have the same effect. I have seen many new entry-level collectors bringing up the prices of common samples. If 10 -20 become advanced collectors, this will impact the high-end market. Even two or three intense collectors will make a difference.

More samples will continue to appear each year, but the core of the market could become the early ones, especially PCGS rattlers, doilies, and green labels. Made for only a few years, they are physical reminders of the early days of certification.

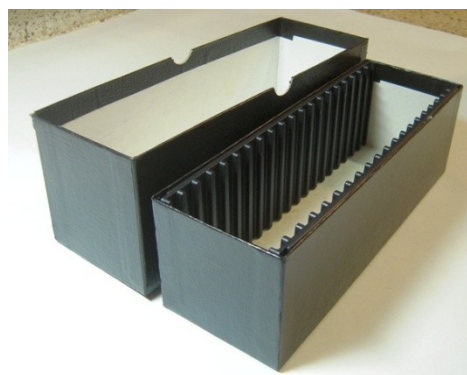
In the year 2040, the sample hobby could be something like collecting United States tokens, such as Hard Times tokens. Common, worn, political tokens sell for a few dollars, with MS-63 examples available for \$150. Many people have one or two in their collections. The scarce Hard Times varieties, while unknown to most collectors, are the subject of intense interest to the few specialists, who eagerly bid rare store cards up to four-figure prices. The mid-21st century could see a landmark sale of scarce samples, with a dedicated catalog and brief essays waxing poetic about the virtues of NGC gold backs. More likely, samples will enter the edge of the mainstream and become a niche similar to collecting so-called dollars or numismatic books.

Investing in coins is seldom the best choice and investing in sample slabs borders on madness. If anyone did want to invest in samples, however, they should buy the scarce early varieties. Compugrades. Solid-zeroes. Hallmarks. Gold backs. And, if you can, the “I’ve never seen that before” PCGS rarities like the Peace dollar, Franklin half, and hand-cut doily.

It will remain a thin market pursued by specialists. The numbers, however, could and should become thicker.

Buying and Selling

The Orange County, California Coin Club had 50 slabs, featuring new 2016-P Nixon dollars, made to commemorate the World’s Fair of Money coming the area. The back has the usual ANACS wording, “SAMPLE - NOT FOR RESALE.” Although most are reserved for club members and guests, a few are available to Sample Slab Update readers for \$15 including shipping.



A PCGS black rattler box is available for \$65 including shipping. Obtained from a former PCGS employee, this does not have the PCGS sticker on the end and appears unused.



I recently purchased a sample slab collection for resale. The clear highlights are two scarce PCGS no-date Buffalo nickels (PCGS-005-3-2). These are desirable pieces, and I am asking the reasonable catalog price of \$225 each. The collection also includes two ANACS 2009 Formative Years cents from the 2009 World’s Fair of Money (ANACS-100-3-1). These catalog at \$35, but they are yours for \$25 each. The rest of the collection is common pieces. As a start, save me the trouble of cataloging a lot of 16 NGC state quarters (1999 – 2004, with duplication) and earn yourself a bargain for only \$69 including shipping.

To order any of the above, send PayPal to davidschwager@hotmail.com.

About half of the lots in [Sample Slab Update Sale #3](#) are still available. Most of the unsold items will eventually go on eBay, so you may get a chance to bid on the samples there.

If you would like to place a brief buy or sell ad in the next Sample Slab Update at no charge, please email me.

Sample Slab Update #12 – July 2016 (sent 7/20/16). By David Schwager, Fountain Valley, California. davidschwager@hotmail.com. Please email me to be added to or removed from the mailing list. Comments and submissions are welcome. See SampleSlabBook.com for past issues.